



TB Free California: A Statewide Initiative to Prevent and Eliminate TB

March 6, 2025

Dana Black Melgares, RN, MPH, CIC

TB Prevention Nurse Consultant

Tuberculosis Control Branch, California Department of Public Health

Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Understand the importance of Tuberculosis (TB) prevention to reach the goal of TB elimination
- Describe a statewide TB prevention initiative: TB Free California
- Recognize the priorities of TB Free California and how they are achieved
- Describe how and why TB Free California provides outreach and education statewide to nurses
- Locate relevant and useful TB prevention resources

Why Focus on TB Prevention?

- ***Yes, TB is preventable!***
- **Latent TB Infection (LTBI)** vs. **Active TB Disease**
- No effective vaccine
- Costs and consequences
 - Hospitalization, long-term effects, death
 - Health disparity
 - Prevention cheaper than treatment (\$23,000+/person)
- **Barriers:**



Patients



Providers



System

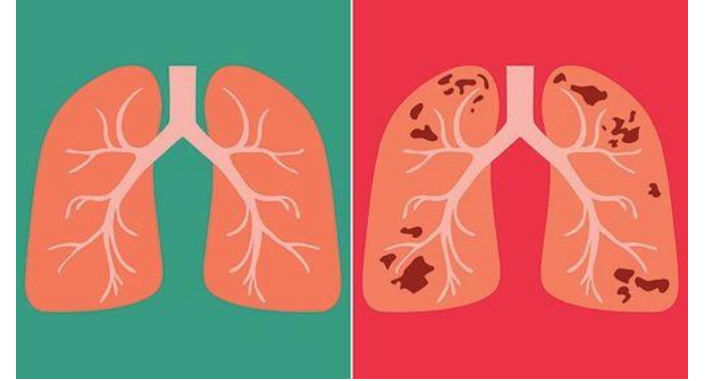


Image: Everyday Health

TB in the U.S. & California

United States, 2024

- 10,347 persons reported to have TB
- 3.0 cases per 100,000 population
- 565 deaths reported
- **Estimated 13 million with LTBI**

California, 2024

- 2,100 persons reported to have TB
- 5.4 cases per 100,000 population
- 258 deaths (14% of cases)
- **Estimated >2 million with LTBI**
- **Severe health disparity**

CDC, 2025
CDPH, 2025

TB Cases by Reporting Area, United States, 2023

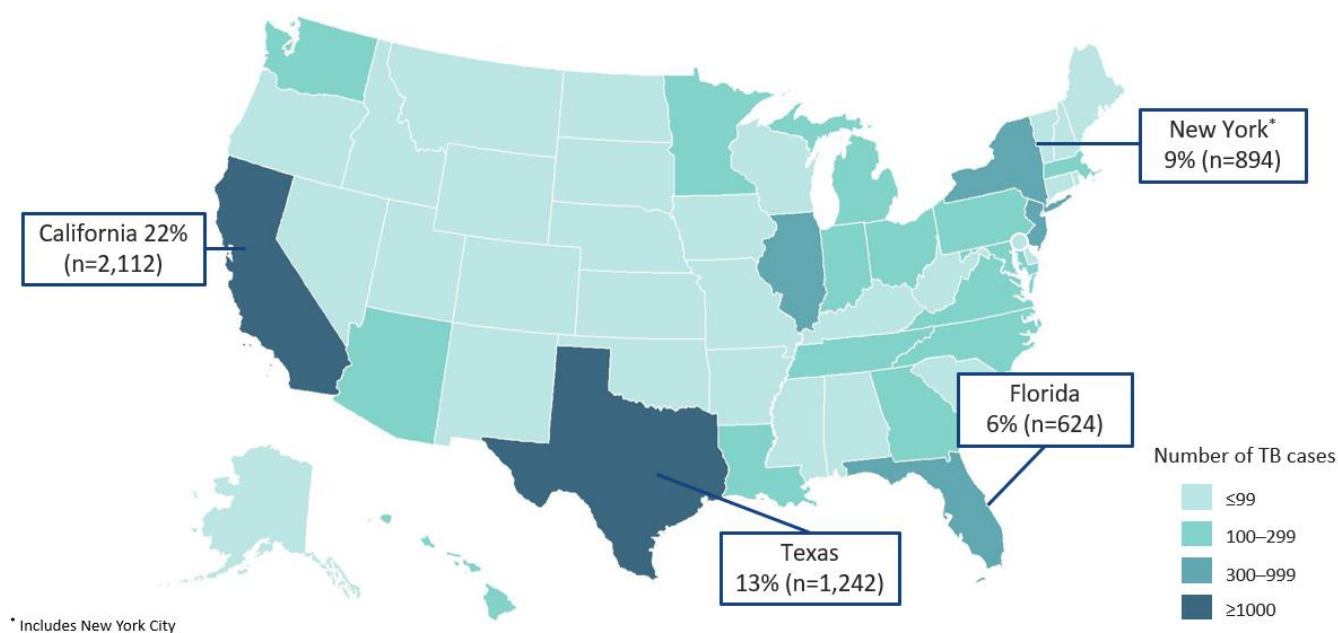


Image: CDC, 2024

Polling Question

? Why is it important for state and local TB programs to focus on TB prevention?

1. To protect those at highest risk for TB transmission &/or progression
2. To address health inequities & disparities
3. To decrease individual & societal costs related to TB disease
4. To achieve TB elimination
- ✓ 5. All of the above

TB Free California



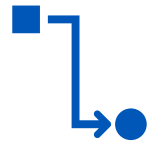
- Background
 - Project of CDPH TB Control Branch
 - Grant-funded since 2017
- Team
 - 2 clinical (MD, RN), 2 epidemiologists, health educator, project specialist
- ***Goal: increase LTBI testing and treatment in CA***



Partnership



Prevention



Impact



Education



TB Free California

Past & Present Work



Getty Images

TB Free California: Clinical



- Assessing knowledge, attitudes, beliefs about LTBI care
- Training providers on evidence-based TB prevention practices
- Consulting with providers about LTBI care
- Providing 1:1 clinic support
- Creating educational tools for medical providers

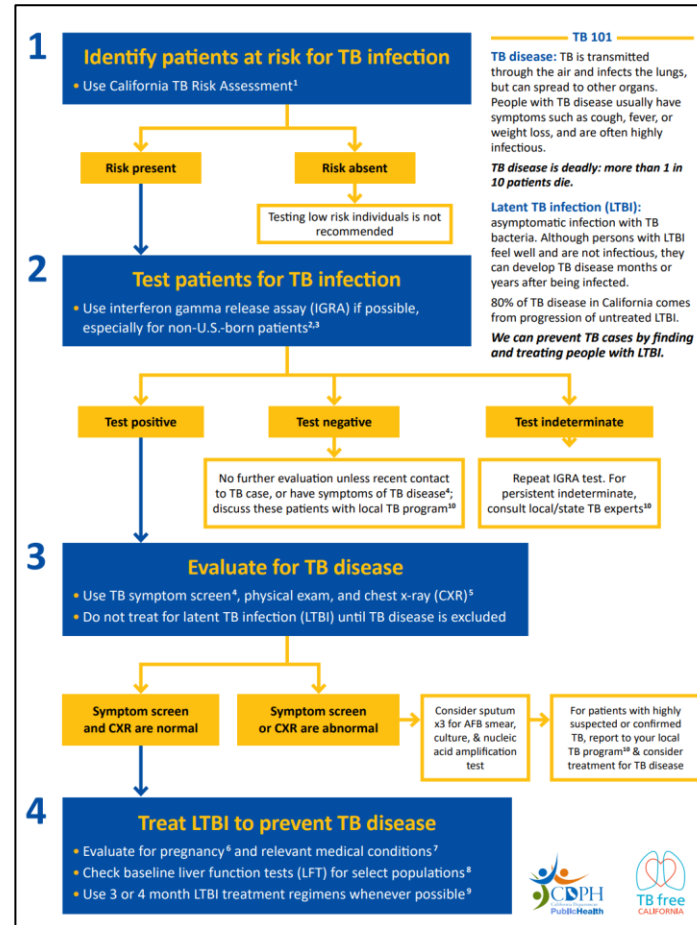
Examples/Outcomes



Rifamycin Drug-Drug Interactions Guide



Prevent TB in 4 Steps Guide for Clinicians



Latent TB Infection Trainings for Clinicians

LATENT TB INFECTION (LTBI): OPPORTUNITIES FOR PREVENTING TB

A FREE VIRTUAL TRAINING (WITH 1.5 CEUS)
FOR CALIFORNIA NURSES AND OTHER
PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25TH, 2025
12:00-1:35PM PST

PRESENTED BY DANA MELGARES, RN, MPH
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH TB CONTROL BRANCH

Did you know?

**More than 2 million
Californians have LTBI, and
most are unaware and
untreated.**

**There was a substantial
increase (15%) in new TB
cases in California between
2022 and 2023.**

Training Objectives

By the end of the training, participants will be able to:

- Identify persons at higher risk for tuberculosis (TB) who should be tested for TB infection
- Describe and apply how to test for TB infection, including the preferential use of interferon gamma release assay (IGRA) testing for non-U.S.-born persons
- Describe and advise on/facilitate the proper clinical evaluation needed to distinguish latent TB infection (LTBI) from TB disease
- Describe and advise on/provide the preferred short-course treatment regimens for LTBI to improve treatment completion outcomes

Nursing Outreach/Education



- “Dear Colleague” letters to CA BRN licensees
 - Update to USPSTF guidelines re: TB screening
 - Increase in TB cases 2023-2024
 - AB 2132: primary care provider requirements
- Annual statewide virtual trainings with nursing CEUs
 - **~1,200 participants** in 2024 and 2025
- Clinical consults by email and phone



Polling Question

? How are nurses involved in TB prevention efforts?

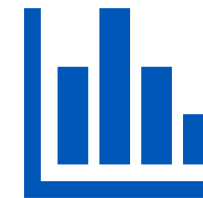
1. Providing patient and/or provider education
2. Advocating for patients
3. Working to decrease stigma and increase health equity
4. Identifying need for screening/testing/treatment
- ✓ 5. All of the above

TB Free California: Epidemiology



- Publishing on research projects with community clinics
- Supporting CalCONNECT development and pilot projects
- Supporting clinics with measuring LTBI care cascades
- Writing/presenting TB prevention guidebook
- Funding pilot grants for TB prevention QI projects
- Researching requirements for TB quality measures in CMS

Examples/Outcomes



TB Prevention Guidebook & Webinar

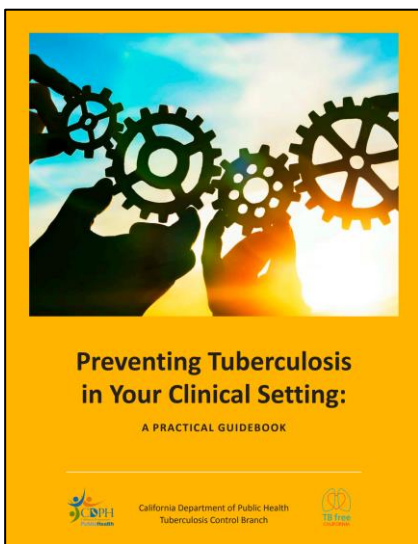
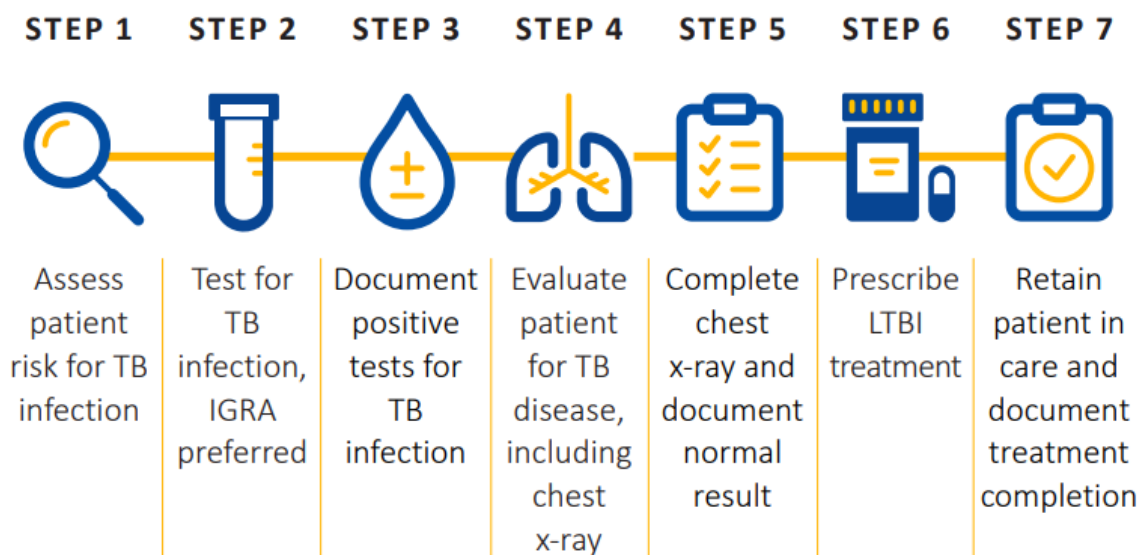


FIGURE 6: Steps in the LTBI care cascade



EMR Interventions:

- Standing reminders/orders for TB screening, testing, treatment
- Automated positive result letters
- LTBI treatment form
- Provider progress reports
- Evaluation of care cascade

TB Free California: Health Education



- Creating culturally & linguistically diverse education materials
- Collaborating w/ CBOs, state/local entities to incorporate TB messaging
- Training Community Health Workers (CHWs)
- Organizing/facilitating regional TB prevention Community of Practices (CoP)
- Supporting cultural awareness training partnerships
- Promoting policy development and implementation

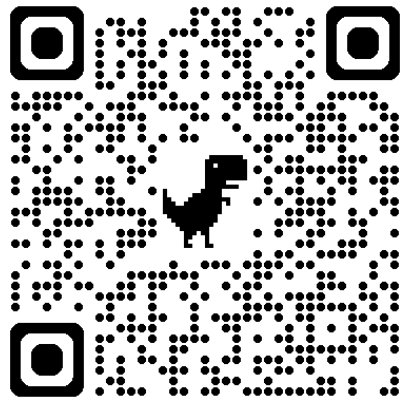
Examples/Outcomes



TB & Pregnancy Toolkit

Protect yourself and your baby from TB.

Talk to your health care provider about getting tested.



CDPH TB Free CA

*Announcing a new opportunity for Bay Area counties**

Bay Area TB Prevention Community of Practice Forum



A virtual forum for Bay Area TB programs and their community clinic and health system partners

First meeting: Monday, March 4, 2023, 12-1:30pm



1 in 17 Californians is infected with TB.



87% of active TB in California is due to persons progressing from **latent TB infection (LTBI)**. But we can **PREVENT TB!**

Community of Practice goal: Identify and share lessons learned for increasing provider and health system engagement to facilitate improved TB prevention strategies and outcomes

Who should attend:

- Leadership from federally-qualified health centers and other community clinics
- Local TB program staff
- Other TB program TB elimination partners

TB Prevention Community of Practice

Tuberculosis (TB) Prevention Curriculum

Presented by CDPH TB Free California
Dana Melgares, RN, MPH
Nozomi Fukui, MPH
Ramanjot Kaur, MPH

March 26, 2025




TB Training for Community Health Workers (CHWs)


Educational Materials

VIETNAMESE TUBERCULOSIS IN CALIFORNIA, 2023

- Advocacy Group Fact Sheet -



SYMPTOMS OF TB DISEASE



Tuberculosis (TB) is a life-threatening disease that spreads through the air with profound medical and economic consequences. Thankfully, this infection is detectable with a one-time test, and treatment can remove TB from the body.

In 2023, 2,113 Californians were diagnosed with TB disease. Nearly half (49%) of California's TB cases occurred in Asian* persons and 19% of those TB cases occurred among Vietnamese persons. (* non-Hispanic)

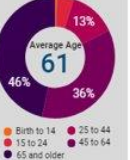
Every year, of all California TB cases:

- 1/2** are hospitalized
- 1 in 6** die within 5 years of diagnosis

Did you know TB among Vietnamese persons in California...

- 25% HAD DIABETES AS A RISK FACTOR**
- 22 years** is the average time after U.S. arrival when TB disease was reported

Older adults at risk for TB should talk to their doctor about latent TB infection.



35% Female, 65% Male

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT TB, VISIT: CDPH.CA.GOV/TBCB OR SCAN QR CODE

當我意識到自己有可能患上潛伏性肺結核，我馬上就向醫生要求進行篩檢

如果您在亞洲地區出生或曾在亞洲長時間停留，請諮詢您的醫生關於潛伏性肺結核的篩檢



LEARN MORE ABOUT 潛伏性肺結核

bit.ly/CDPHTB

Are you at risk for TB?

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease caused by bacteria. It spreads from person to person through the air.

Question	YES	NO
Were you born in a country where TB is common? Or have you: • traveled to; OR • lived in; OR • often crossed the border to a country where TB is common? A country where TB is common is anywhere, EXCEPT: United States, Canada, western or northern Europe, Australia, New Zealand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you lived with or spent time with someone who has had TB?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you a person living with HIV/ AIDS or have you received an organ transplant? Do you take medication that weakens your immune system?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you live, or have you lived, in a group setting, such as a homeless shelter or a jail or a prison?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered **YES** to any of these questions, ask your doctor to be tested for TB.

اگر شما در این اواخر از افغانستان آمده اید، یا با شخص مصاب به توبرکلوز/ سل زندگی کرده اید، در خطر مصاب شدن به توبرکلوز/ سل هستید.

با دکترتان صحبت کنید تا همین امروز آزمایش انجام دهید.

TBFREECALIFORNIA.ORG

Si has vivido en México o América central o Sudamérica, o con alguien enfermo de la tuberculosis, estas en riesgo de tener la infección de la tuberculosis.

Pláticale a tu doctor acerca de hacerte la prueba hoy.

MÁS INFORMACIÓN SOBRE EL LATENTE TB


bit.ly/CDPHTB



For Pregnant People and New Parents

Answering your questions about Tuberculosis (TB)

CDPH California Department of Public Health



TB disease can make you and your family, but it is preventable. It is important to protect you and your family. Talk to your health care provider about getting tested and taking medication if needed.


Today is World TB Day!



CDPH

Millions of Californians live with inactive tuberculosis (TB) but don't know it.

Talk to your doctor about getting tested.




CDPH



Polling Question



What is the overall goal of TB Free California?

1. Prevent and eliminate TB in the United States
2. Provide TB testing materials and medication
-  3. Prevent and eliminate TB in California
4. Investigate TB outbreaks in California
5. Provide consultation on patients with TB disease

TB Prevention Resources

CDPH:

[TB Free California](#)

[CDPH TB Control Branch](#)

[Prevent Tuberculosis in 4 steps: A Guide for Medical Providers](#)

[California TB Risk Assessments](#)

[How to talk to adult patients about LTBI](#) & [How to talk to pediatric patients about LTBI](#)

CDC:

[CDC LTBI Testing & Treatment: Summary of U.S.](#)

[Recommendations](#)

[CDC Guidelines for Diagnosis of Tuberculosis in Adults and Children](#)

[CDC Think. Test. Treat TB.](#)

[CDC Core Curriculum on TB: What the Clinician Should Know](#)

Other:

[NTCA 2024 LTBI Clinical Guide](#)

[Curry International Tuberculosis Center \(UCSF\)](#)

[California Tuberculosis Controllers Association: For Providers](#)

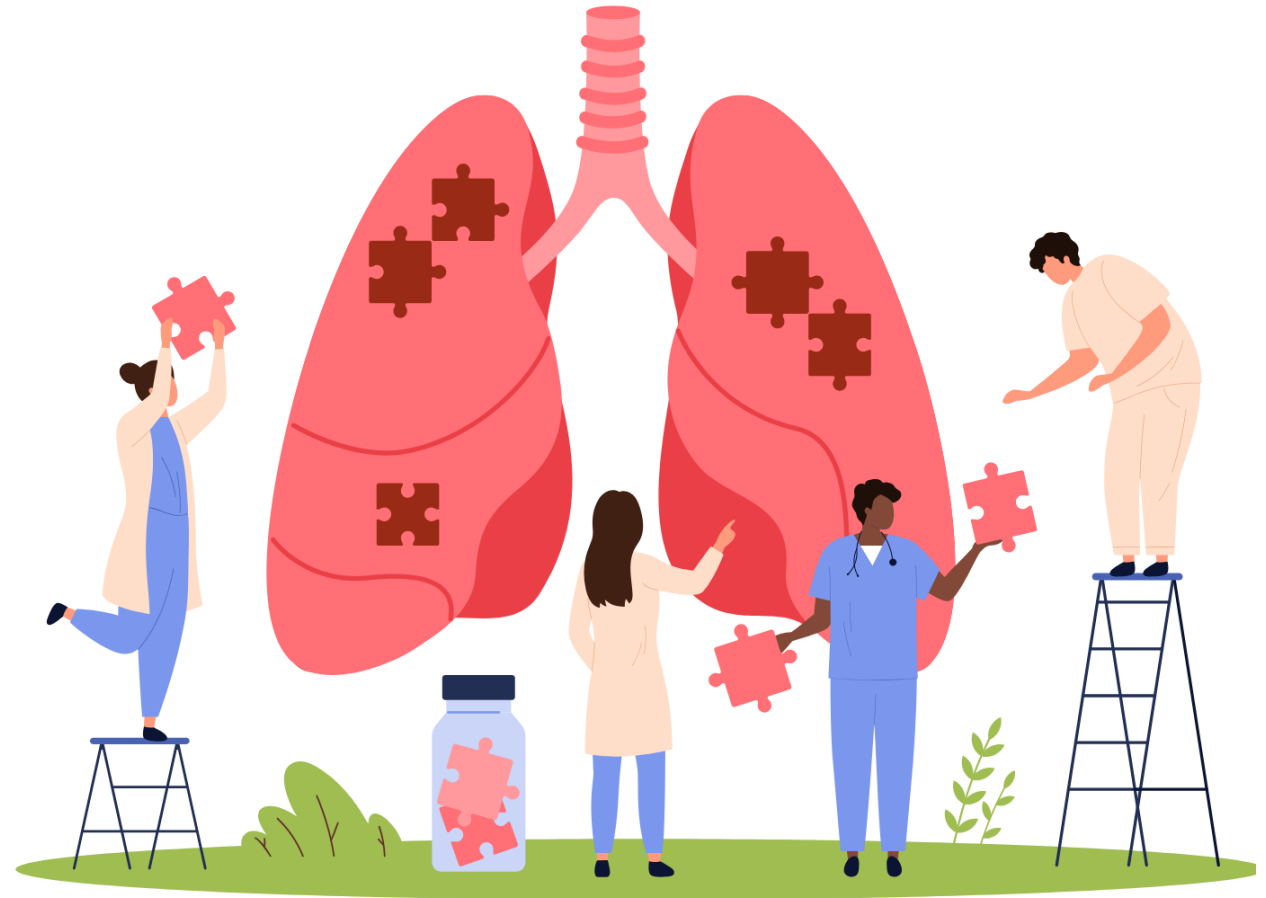
[The Spectrum of TB from Infection to Disease](#)

[TB Case Management: A Guide for Nurses](#)

Contact Information

Dana.Melgares@cdph.ca.gov

TBFreeCATraining@cdph.ca.gov



Questions





Thank you!